

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

AID-05 EB-07 /067 W

----- 003751

R 041110Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 380

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 LAHORE 0406

E.OM 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PK

SUBJECT: BHUTTO BEGINS TOUR OF LAHORE DIVISION

REF: LAHORE 0354

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO KICKED OFF HIS TOUR OF LAHORE DIVISION APRIL 3 WITH PUBLIC SPEECH AT SIALKOT. FOR MOST PART, HE REPEATED THEMES DEVELOPED IN EARLIER SPEECHES OF "GRAND TOUR" OF PUNJAB, ESPECIALLY THAT DAUD REGIME IN AFGHANISTAN AND OPPOSITION IN PAKISTAN WERE CONSPIRING TO BREAK AWAY NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE, AND THAT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN PAKISTAN, ALBEIT DIFFICULT, WAS BETTER THAN THAT IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. ONCE AGAIN, PM REJECTED AFGHAN AND OPPOSITION "DEMANDS" FOR ENDING BAN ON NAP AND RELEASING ITS LEADERS. TONE OF SPEECH, HOWEVER, APPEARED SOMEWHAT MORE MODERATE THAN THOSE IN SARGODHA LAST MONTH (REFTEL). END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO BEGAN HIS FOUR-DAY TOUR OF LAHORE

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DIVISION WITH SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING IN SIALKOT APRIL 3.

ACCORDING TO ALL LAHORE NEWSPAPERS, CROWD WAS ONE OF LARGEST BHUTTO HAS ADDRESSED DURING "GRAND TOUR" OF PUNJAB. LATER, BHUTTO HELD ONE OF HIS STANDARD "OPEN KUTCHERIES," HEARING COMPLAINTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS FROM PUBLIC. IN EVENING HE FLEW TO LAHORE FOR NIGHT, AND IS DUE TO ADDRESS PUBLIC MEETINGS AT GUJRANWALA APRIL 4, SHEIKHUPURA APRIL 5, AND LAHORE APRIL 6.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, PRIME MINISTER BEGAN SIALKOT SPEECH BY DECLARING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS "DETERMINED TO CRUSH SUBVERSION WITH AN IRON HAND." HE ASKED PEOPLE TO REMEMBER HOW GOVERNMENT HAD "SAVED" PAKISTAN FROM FURTHER DISINTEGRATION BY LAUNCHING SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTI"NATIONAL ELEMENTS" IN BALUCHISTAN AND NWFP. HE CHARGED THAT AFGHANISTAN'S DEMAND, LIKE THAT OF POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN PAKISTAN, FOR RELEASE OF NAP LEADERS IMPLIED THAT GOP SHOULD "ACCEPT POSITION TAKEN BY THE (AFGHAN) JUNTA FOR THE DIVISION OF THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE." HE THEN ASSERTED, "OUR REPLY TO OPPOSITION PARTIES AND AGHAN JUNTA IS THAT WE CANNOT BE PRESSURISED INTO ACCEPTING THAT POSITION, AND THAT NWFP WAS AND IS PART AND PARCEL OF PAKISTAN, AND WILL REMAIN SUCH IN THE FUTURE."

3. PRIME MINISTER REFERRED TO AFGHAN CALL -- AND OPPOSITION DEMAND IN PARLIAMENT -- FOR LIFTING RESTRICTIONS ON NAP AS "A SUBTERFUGE SUPPORTING THE DEFUNCT NAP AND AFGHAN REGIME ON THE LATTER'S DEMAND FOR CHANGING THE NAME OF THE NWFP, AS A STEP TOWARD CARVING OUT A SEPARATE PAKHTOONISTAN." HE CALLED DEMAND FOR PAKHTOONISTAN "UNREALISTIC" AND DECLARED THAT NO SUCH CHANGE WOULD BE ALLOWED. LATER ON, HE TERMED PAKHTOONISTAN " INNOVATION OF A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE WHO HAD OPPOSED PAKISTAN," NOT THE WORK OF NWFP ASSEMBLY.

4. BHUTTO CONTENDED HIS GOVERNMENT HAD EXPOSED OPPOSITION'S "MALICIOUS PROPAGANDA" TO EFFECT THAT GOP WAS "OUT TO DESTROY THE RESIDUARY OF PAKISTAN." HE OBSERVED THAT EAST PAKISTAN HAD BEEN SEPARATED AT TIME BEFORE THERE WAS A PPP GOVERNMENT, "AS A RESULT OF THE CONSPIRACIES HATCHED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY MUJIB AND THE OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WHICH ARE NOW BOYCOTTING PARLIAMENT."

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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INFO AMEMBASSY KACCA

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5. REFERRING TO OPPOSITION CHARGE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD "STRANGLERED" DEMOCRACY, PRIME MINISTER ASSERTED THAT "NO SANE PERSON" WOULD BELIEVE OPPOSITION PROPAGANDA IF HE REMEMBERED THAT GOVERNMENT HAD MANAGED TO SECURE RETURN OF TERRITORY CAPTURED BY INDIA WITHIN FEW MONTHS, WHEREAS ARAB TERRITORIES REMAINED UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION SEVEN YEARS AFTER THEY WERE TAKEN. (NOTE: PM MADE PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SHAKARGARTH SALIENT IN THIS REGARD. ADDRESSEES MAY RECALL THAT SHAKARGARTH, IN SIALKOT DISTRICT, WAS CAPTURED BY INDIAN ARMY IN 1971 WAR AND LATER RETURNED.) BHUTTO ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW ANY ONE COULD BELIEVE OPPOSITION CLAIM THAT PPP GOVERNMENT OPPOSED CONSTITUTION WHEN "DEMOCRACY IS OUR POLICY" (FAMOUS PPP SLOGAN) AND "PRINCIPAL GUIDELINE" OF PEOPLE'S PARTY.

6. BHUTTO REPORTEDLY DWELLED ON SUBJECT OF ARMY, PAYING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RICH TRIBUTE TO ITS PAST ACHIEVEMENTS. (THIS IS SINE QUA NON IN SIALKOT DISTRICT, MAJOR RECRUITING GROUND FOR PAK MILITARY SERVICES.)

7. ON ECONOMIC FRONT, BHUTTO AGAIN CONTRASTED PAKISTAN WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND ASKED PUBLIC TO BEAR IN MIND THAT, WHILE PRICE INCREASES IN PAKISTAN WERE HIGH, THEY WERE NOT AS STEEP AS IN AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH AND INDIA. HIS GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE GIVEN CREDIT FOR KEEPING PRICES DOWN, DESPITE NECESSITY OF IMPORTING 1.5 MILLION TONS OF WHEAT FROM ABROAD. AT PRESENT TIME GOVERNMENT WAS SPENDING RS. 370 MILLION ON VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN LAHORE DIVISION ALONE. HE ALSO CITED NUMBER OF OTHER GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED PROJECTS, INCLUDING SIX NEW SUGAR MILLS, AND FERTILIZER FACTORY IN BAHAWALPUR DIVISION. HE CONTENDED THAT PRICES WOULD BE "FULLY CONTROLLED" WITHIN NEXT SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS; AND, ACCORDING TO URDU PRESS, PROMISED THAT PRICE OF WHEAT WOULD "COME DOWN TO NORMAL" IN NEXT FEW MONTHS. HOWEVER, HE ALSO NOTED THAT GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY INCREASED PROCUREMENT PRICE FOR WHEAT TO RS. 37 PER MAUND, AS INCENTIVE TO GROWERS.

8. COMMENT: SIALKOT SPEECH WAS PRETTY MUCH STANDARD BHUTTO FARE AND IS THEREFORE UNLIKELY TO DRAW MUCH NEW REACTION. ALTHOUGH WHAT HE SAID WAS GENERALLY UNEXCEPTIONAL, PRIME MINISTER MAY HAVE PROVIDED BASIS FOR FUTURE OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN ARGUMENT BY MAKING HIS COMMENTS ON ECONOMY SOUND LIKE COMMITMENTS. IT IS ABOUT THE ONLY SUBJECT WITH WHICH OPPOSITION HAS CHANCE OF MAKING HEADWAY. SIZE OF CROWD, AS USUAL, WAS DUE IN LARGE MEASURE TO PUNJAB GOVERNMENT'S FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE FROM TOWNS AND VILLAGES OF DISTRICT IN REACHING SIALKOT BY SPECIAL BUSES AND TRAINS. IF PROCESS IS CONTINUED, LARGEST CROWD OF TOUR WILL BE PRESENTED TO PRIME MINISTER IN LAHORE APRIL 6. SPENGLER

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